

# Why Pertussis matters.....

Pertussis (Whooping cough) outbreaks continue to impact children & adults, both locally and across the US. However, recent data on immunization rates indicate that only 6% of adults have been immunized against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis.

Did you know that more than 1/2 of infants who get pertussis must be hospitalized and about 1 in 5 infants with pertussis develop pneumonia? And when a source of infection for infant pertussis can be identified, 83% are family members or close contacts.(1)

Since 2005 **ACIP, AAP, ACOG, AAFP, & SAM** have recommended one dose of Tdap vaccine as the **standard of care** for anyone age 10-64 years. Beginning in 2011, ACIP expanded these recommendations to include Tdap vaccinations for adults 65 years of age and older (2). Tdap may be administered regardless of interval since the last tetanus or diphtheria toxoid -containing vaccine.

## What can you as a provider do to protect infants?

- Cocoon to protect newborns by vaccinating their close contacts (siblings, parents, grandparents, care providers).
- Treat every office visit as an opportunity to educate your patients, and then immunize your patients with Tdap vaccine to protect both your patients and the infants they interact with.
- Develop an office policy for nursing staff to review immunization status as part of the assessment process.

## ACIP recommendations for Tdap vaccination:

- All adolescents 10 years of age and older.
- All adults aged 19 years and older who have not previously received a dose of Tdap.

### Special target groups:

-All *healthcare workers and daycare personnel* -- to protect themselves and their patients

-*Pregnancy* -- Tdap should ideally be given prior to pregnancy, but can be given in the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester, after 20 weeks gestation. Otherwise, administer Tdap immediately post-partum, preferably prior to discharge using standing orders.

1. Bisgard KM, et al. *Pediatr Infect Dis J.* 2004;23:985-989.
2. MMWR Jan 14, 2011 60(01);13-15. Updated Recommendations for Use of Tetanus Toxoid and Acellular Pertussis (Tdap) Vaccine from the ACIP, 2010. [www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6001a4.htm?s\\_cid=mm6001a4\\_w](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6001a4.htm?s_cid=mm6001a4_w)



### **PERTUSSIS VACCINE FOR FAMILIES OF INFANTS**

Congratulations on the birth of your baby! We are excited to begin our relationship with you and your child as we provide pediatric care for your family.

- We encourage parents and caregivers of infants to obtain **pertussis vaccination booster** for themselves as soon as possible after birth of the new baby.
- Pertussis, or whooping cough, is a serious bacterial infection of the lungs.
- Young infants who get pertussis are at risk for lung damage, brain damage and death. Infant vaccines include pertussis (the “P” of DTaP vaccine), but it takes a series of vaccines given over months for the infant’s immune system to establish full protection.
- Immunity from pertussis vaccination in early childhood wears off by about the age of ten. Pertussis infection in older children or adults causes a prolonged cough but is often unrecognized, incorrectly assumed to be a bad cold.
- We know that most babies who get pertussis catch it from a parent, sibling or caregiver.
- We recommend that parents and caregivers of infants receive a Tdap booster. This is a combination tetanus and pertussis vaccine, and counts for tetanus booster as well. A two-year interval is recommended between the most recent tetanus booster and Tdap. Siblings age 11 and up should also receive Tdap vaccine.
- Please schedule an appointment as soon as possible to receive a Tdap vaccine booster for you and everyone over age 10 that interacts with your baby.

Talk with your health care provider regarding any questions you may have about this vaccine recommendation or any other vaccine recommendations for you and your family!

# Whooping Cough

## Be Aware. Treat It Early.



### What Is Whooping Cough?

- Whooping cough disease (also called pertussis) causes coughing fits that make it hard to breathe.
- It spreads easily when someone with the disease coughs or sneezes.
- It can kill young babies.

### Whooping Cough Signs and Symptoms

#### Early Symptoms

Often, symptoms start mild and are like a common cold:

- runny nose
- low or no fever
- sneezing
- mild cough

#### Symptoms After 1-2 Weeks

Symptoms can get worse fast and can last for months. They include bad coughing attacks that may lead to:

- vomiting
- problems breathing
- a red or blue face
- extreme tiredness
- a “whoop” sound
- sweating spells

#### Symptoms in Infants Are Different

Infants younger than 6 months old often do not have a typical cough. In the early stages, infants may:

- gasp or gag
- get very tired
- stop breathing
- have seizures

Symptoms can get worse very fast. Often, babies need to go to the hospital for care.

### Treat Whooping Cough Early

#### Call Your Doctor If You or a Family Member:

- Are around someone who has whooping cough or a bad cough
- Have any symptoms of whooping cough

#### Your Doctor May Prescribe an Antibiotic Medicine

Early treatment with antibiotic medicine can:

- Keep you from getting sicker
- Prevent you from spreading the disease to others
- Be given to infants and other household members to prevent them from getting sick

#### If You Have Whooping Cough:

- Stay home. Avoid contact with others until you have finished treatment.
- If you are caring for an infant, have an adult who is not sick, feed, hold, and care for your baby.

### Whooping Cough Shots Prevent the Disease

- Everyone needs to be up-to-date on their whooping cough shots (DTaP for kids younger than 7 years; or Tdap for older ages).
- Immunity from the disease or the shots wears off, so people 10 years and older need a booster shot.
- Newborn babies are too young for the shots.
- Keep your baby away from anyone with a cough or cold symptoms.

## Know the Symptoms. Call Your Doctor.

[www.getimmunizedca.org](http://www.getimmunizedca.org)



# Stop Pertussis.

## Pregnant Women Rely on You.



### Clinicians Can Prevent Pertussis

Newborns can die from pertussis. Infants most often contract pertussis from family members. Women of childbearing age should get a pertussis booster shot (Tdap) if they do not have documentation of prior Tdap vaccination.

#### Tdap can be given:

- **Before** pregnancy (ideal)
- **During** pregnancy (2nd and 3rd trimester preferred)
- **After** giving birth (even while breastfeeding)  
Immunize postpartum women who have not received a Tdap shot, before hospital discharge.
- To other family members and close contacts of infants anytime before delivery.

### Think Pertussis

- Pertussis is often misdiagnosed. It starts with mild, cold-like respiratory symptoms.
- Typically, after 1-2 weeks, symptoms in adults progress to severe coughing attacks that may include:
  - Post-tussive vomiting
  - A high-pitched “whoop”
  - Sweating episodes, gagging, choking sensation
  - Complications, such as broken ribs or pneumonia
- Pertussis immunity wanes, so it is possible to get pertussis even with a history of vaccination or disease.

### Test for Pertussis

If your patient has pertussis-like symptoms (especially in the 3rd trimester):

- Promptly obtain a [nasal aspirate](#) (preferred specimen) or nasopharyngeal swab for PCR and/or culture.

### Treat Pertussis, Reduce Transmission

- Antibiotics stop transmission, and if given early, may reduce pertussis severity. Erythromycin, azithromycin, or clarithromycin are the preferred antibiotics for [pertussis treatment or postexposure prophylaxis](#) during pregnancy.
- If your pregnant patient is exposed to pertussis, particularly in her 3rd trimester, prophylactic antibiotic therapy is recommended to protect her newborn.
- If she has pertussis, especially near-term or at delivery, treat her with antibiotics and ensure that her newborn and household contacts receive prophylactic antibiotic therapy.
- Place new mothers with pertussis on droplet precautions during their hospitalization for delivery or until they have received 5 days of a full course of antibiotics. However, if both mother and infant are receiving antibiotic treatment, it is not necessary to isolate the baby from the mother and breast feeding is encouraged.



### Dylan's Story

*I caught pertussis in my 9th month of pregnancy. Two weeks after giving birth, my son Dylan died of pertussis that he caught from me. My doctor thought it was just a cold. — Mariah, Dylan's Mom* (Watch her full story on [www.ShotbyShot.org](http://www.ShotbyShot.org))

For more information, visit [www.pregnancyshotsca.org](http://www.pregnancyshotsca.org)



# Parents:



## Protect Yourself and Your Children from Whooping Cough!

### Why Whooping Cough is Serious:

Whooping cough (also known as pertussis) is a contagious disease that can be passed easily from person to person. It is very serious for babies and can cause them to cough so much that they cannot breathe. Hundreds of babies are hospitalized each year for whooping cough, and some die from it.

Whooping cough can cause adults or teens to have severe coughing that leads to vomiting or broken ribs. They can be hospitalized for pneumonia and miss weeks of work or school. Even worse, they can spread whooping cough to the babies at home.

### Ways to Protect Yourself and Your Family:

#### Get Your Tetanus Booster (Tdap)

Everybody in the family should be immunized against whooping cough to protect themselves and the baby at home. Parents should ask their doctor for the Tdap vaccine that includes a tetanus and diphtheria booster and also protects against whooping cough.

#### Make Sure Your Children are Up-to-Date on Their Immunizations

Children 7 years of age and older can also get the new Tdap booster. Infants and toddlers need four shots against whooping cough, and a booster before starting kindergarten.

#### Cover Your Cough and Wash Your Hands

Whooping cough is spread by coughing. Remind everyone to cover their mouths when coughing and to wash their hands often.

Protect yourself. Protect your family.  
**Get Immunized!**



**Have questions?**

Visit [www.GetImmunizedCa.org](http://www.GetImmunizedCa.org) or call the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Hotline: 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636).





# Grandparents:



Protect  
Yourself  
and Your  
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from  
Whooping  
Cough!

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# Get Immunized!

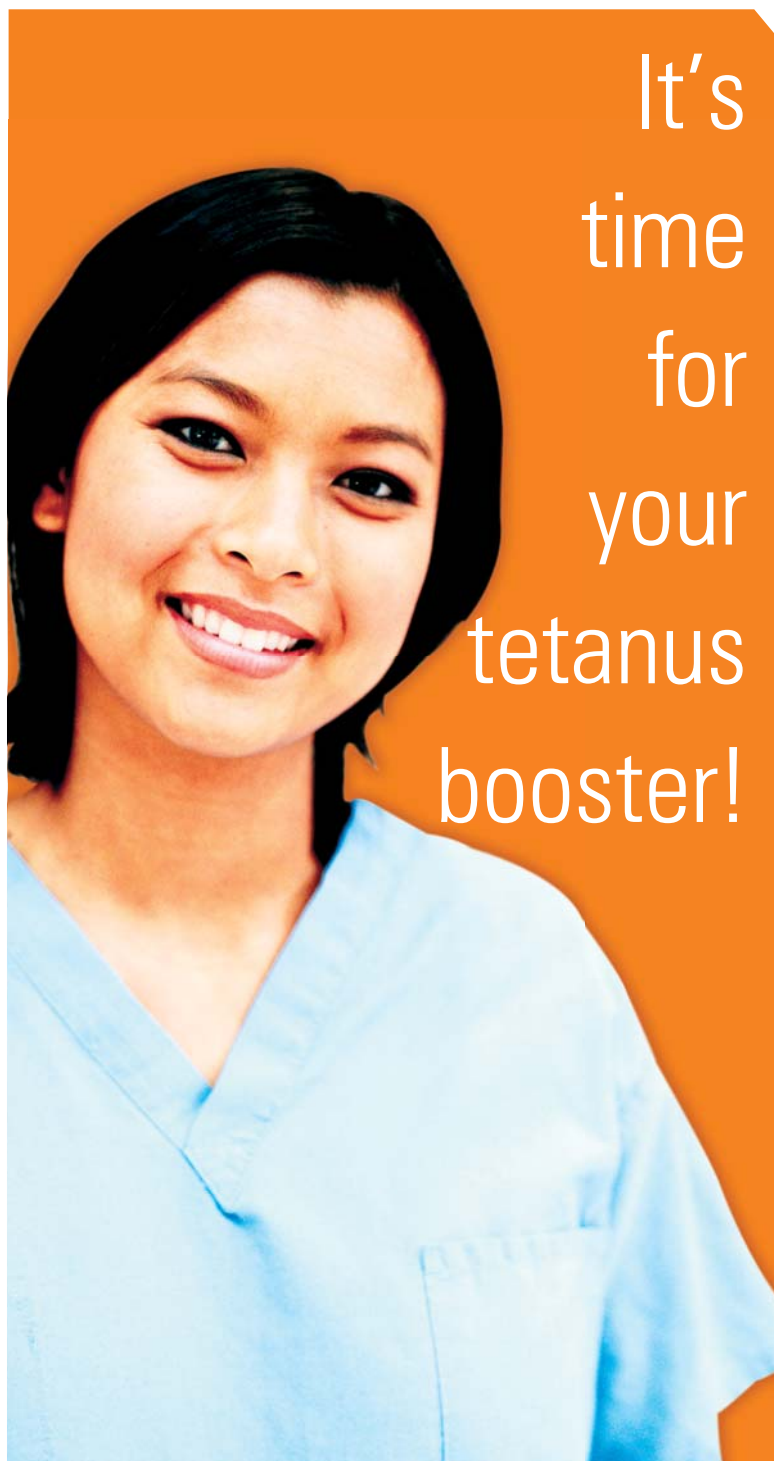


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# If you work in a health care setting...



It's  
time  
for  
your  
tetanus  
booster!

Now you can protect yourself against **whooping cough** with your next tetanus booster. There is a new Tdap vaccine recommended for health care workers.

## Protect Yourself

Health care workers are nearly twice as likely to get whooping cough (pertussis) as other adults. Whooping cough in adults causes coughing fits. In adults you don't hear the characteristic "whoop" sound toddlers make when they have the disease. But it can cause vomiting, broken ribs, and pneumonia, and coughing can last for months.

## Protect Your Family

If you have it, you can spread whooping cough to your family even if you don't feel sick. They could become seriously ill and miss work or school. Babies have the highest risk of getting sick and can die from whooping cough.

## Protect Your Patients

If you catch whooping cough from one patient, you could spread it to another.

**Get the new tetanus booster (Tdap) and protect yourself, your family, and your patients against whooping cough.**



**Have questions?**

Visit [www.GetImmunizedCa.org](http://www.GetImmunizedCa.org) or call the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Hotline: **1-877-554-4625**.

